

MERCK INSTITUTE
FOR
THERAPEUTIC RESEARCH

RAHWAY, N. J.

May 25, 1950

Dr. Joshua Lederberg
The University of Wisconsin
College of Agriculture
Department of Genetics
Madison 6, Wisconsin

Dear Doctor Lederberg:

Unfortunately, we have not made any particular progress on the formic hydrogenlyase of E. coli. We found, indeed, that it would not develop when the cells were grown on synthetic media, but that the addition of casein hydrolysate permitted the enzyme to be formed. We found that the presence of glutamic acid in the synthetic media permitted the development of hydrogenlyase activity in the resting cell stage when casein hydrolysate was supplied to the resting cells. However, supplying the amino acids, alleged to be present in casein hydrolysate in the similar mixture, did not form hydrogenlyase.

This is about the status of our studies at the moment and I doubt whether we will get back to this problem for some time.

Very sincerely yours,


W. W. Umbreit

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